is a good idea, as it would conduce to better understanding between each other. A report will be called for from the Excise Commissioner and the question carefully considered.

27. Inconvenience caused by prohibiting the importation of tobacco into Travancore by post.

Mr. A. J. Wright (Member, Kannan Devan Planters' Association) said that the present prohibition was based upon Notification No. S. R. 4612, dated 5th June 1908. Conditions had changed considerably since the above date and it was now desired to secure some modification of the prohibition. In the absence of definite knowledge of the reasons which necessitated the prohibition, it was not easy to suggest the lines upon which it might be modified, but he appealed to Government to consider the matter at an early date and to endeavour to afford the relief desired. It was clear that there was no question of loss of revenue involved and no suggestion that the payment of customs duty upon each importation by post should be remitted. In modern times, it would scarcely appear to be an insurmountable task for the Excise Department to formulate some scheme which, while doing justice to all interests concerned, would allow private individuals to supply their needs of articles which were not produced within the State and which consequently must be imported in some way or other. There was perhaps little or no hardship involved by the ordinary methods of importation to those who resided in the towns and more populous portions of the State, but they did entail difficulty and great loss of time upon dwellers in the more out of the way parts of the country, who, by the prohibition, were deprived of the readiest and most modern means of procuring their supplies of tobacco. What at first sight might appear to be a difficulty, *viz.*, the collection of the duty by the British Post Office, was at any rate not a serious one upon examination, since at Munaar the collections of the Post Office were being paid into the Devicolam Treasury and no difficulty would arise from the retention of such portions of those collections as had been received for payments of duty. It would, therefore, seem to be merely a question of the assessment of duty on parcels passing through the post which was done every day by the post offices of almost every country in the world upon parcels passing their frontiers.

Dewan's reply.—Consistently with Government getting its revenue, Government will be glad to render you all facilities for importing tobacco and its preparations. It would be well if this matter is also discussed by you at the proposed conference with the Excise Commissioner who will be glad to hear what you have to say.

28. Certain suggestions for the development of trade and commerce.

Mr. K. A. Picha Bava Sahib (Member, Trading Classes, Alleppey) submitted the following suggestions for the development of trade and commerce:—

1. At present, in ordinary weather boats took 3 or 4 days from Ernakulam to reach Alleppey and in foul weather the same journey took 10 or 12 days. Besides, considerable loss of property also occurred. The same was the case with the transport of goods from Quilon to Alleppey. To save the boats from the perils incidental to such journeys, a light Railway should be constructed either from Quilon to Ernakulam or from Arukutti to Alleppey.

2. Boats with merchandise which now plied between Quilon and Alleppey and through the Vembanad lake were subject to the dangers of the monsoon and storms. Sometimes when storms arose, the boats found themselves in a helpless position and capsized. For the protection of such boats, wharfs should be constructed, at an interval of 2 miles, close to the banks to accommodate 50 boats.

3. Under the present system of sale of salt, considerable hardship resulted to the people, though the object of Government was to afford all possible conveniences to them. It was, no doubt, the rule that a merchant could buy salt from *Kuduchandrams* in 15 instalments in a month. But, practically, more than 2

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instalments were not being allowed. Supply of salt was not equal to the demand made with the result that home-made salt was sold at over Rs. 6 and foreign salt at Rs. 7¼ per bag. The time had come, therefore, for Government to fix a maximum price for salt, as in the case of kerosine oil, paddy and rice. The Member also suggested that the system current in Malabar might well be introduced into Travancore, *i. e.*, of issuing permits to individual persons to import salt from Bombay after realising from them the duty due. That would, in due time, render it possible to abolish the *Kuduchandrams* now maintained by Government.

4. When goods were unloaded from the steamers in the roads and transported to the shore, much loss was being sustained by thefts in the boats and otherwise. It was, therefore, necessary that facilities similar to those at the Cochin port should be given.

5. In regard to the Marine Police, it was hard that traders should be asked to contribute towards its maintenance, especially when they were paying several tolls under different heads, every one of which was connected with the maintenance of trade facilities in the Alleppey port.

6. A State Bank or a Bank with substantial State aid should be established.

7. Chungam was a busy centre of trade in which there was a migration of floating population who sometimes lived for 8 or 10 days in their boats. A dispensary in such a locality for the use of both the resident and floating population was indispensable.

8. A foot-bridge should also be constructed at Chungam.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

29. Suggestions for the removal of certain obstacles to the development of trade and commerce.

Mr. P. I. Varkey (Member, Trading Classes, Kottayam) made the following suggestions :—

1. The canal near the Tirunakkara Market should be deepened and improved and the necessary improvements done to the landing ghats.

2. The canal which ended at the Market landing should be extended northwards and a landing ghat constructed close to the Market.

3. The roads leading to the two landing ghats, being steep and uneven, should be made easy for traffic.

4. A Trades Association or a Chamber of Commerce should be formed with Government nominees, to place before Government the requirements of the traders.

5. License system should be introduced for the sale of kerosine oil, especially in view of the recent severe hardships of the people.

6. In regard to the sale of salt, the chief complaint was that the lower subordinates of the *Kuduchandrams* raised false and unnecessary alarm about the quantity of salt available for sale to the public and thus realised from merchants coming from distant places enormous prices. Consequently, those merchants also sold salt at very high rates. The solution proposed was that a weekly statement of salt available for sale and in stock should be published at the *Kuduchandram* gate. Orders should also be given for the issue of salt to recognised purchasers in some definite ratio based on their requirements and the stock available.

7. The Government should help in starting one industry in Kottayam.

8. The Government should also make suitable arrangements for utilizing such raw materials as wax, sandalwood, resin, &c., and discourage their export.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

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